

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the City of South Tucson, Arizona, held Tuesday, January 5, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. at the City of South Tucson Council Chambers, 1601 South 6th Avenue, South Tucson, Arizona.

Staff Present: Veronica Moreno, Interim City Manager
 Bobby Yu, City Attorney
 Lourdes Aguirre, Finance Director
 Irma Yopez-Perez, Grant Writer
 Betty Villegas, Executive Housing Director

Council Present: Bob Teso
 Herman Lopez
 Paul Diaz
 Akanni Oyegbola
 Rita Rogers
 Robert Romero

Others: Lin Rodriguez, 31 W. 34th St.

Mayor Teso called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM #03 – MISSION STATEMENT

Councilwoman Rogers read the Mission Statement.

ITEM #04 – ROLL CALL

All members of the Council were present, except for Councilwoman Romero, who was excused.

ITEM #05 – APPROVAL OF MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING, DECEMBER 15, 2020

Mayor Teso: Are there any additions or corrections?

(No additions or corrections from the Council)

Councilman Romero: Mr. Mayor, I make a motion we approve ...

Mayor Teso: Hold on. I ...

Councilman Romero: ... the minutes ...

Mayor Teso: ... got, ...

Councilwoman Rogers: (Inaudible).

Mayor Teso: ... on page 14, that first big paragraph on there, it says, it's a statement by Ms. Romero where I think it's a statement that was made by ICM Moreno.

Councilwoman Rogers: Mr. Mayor, are you talking about December 1st or December ...

Mayor Teso: No, no, December 15th.

Councilwoman Rogers: Oh, yeah. I was missing.

Mayor Teso: Yeah, you weren't here last, you were missing last week, right? Last meeting. That, that's all I had. Do we have a motion?

Councilwoman Rogers: Mr. Mayor, I move to approve, I mean (inaudible) being approved.

Councilman Romero: Second.

Mayor Teso: Okay.

Mayor Teso: Mr. Romero.

Councilman Romero: Aye.

Mayor Teso: Ms. Rogers.

Councilwoman Rogers: Abstain.

Mayor Teso: Mr. Diaz.

Councilman Diaz: Yes.

Mayor Teso: Mr. Oyegbola.

Acting Mayor Oyegbola: Aye.

Mayor Teso: Mr. Lopez.

Vice-Mayor Lopez: Yes.

Mayor Teso: Aye. Motion carries.

ITEM #06 – MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS: REPORTS OF CURRENT EVENTS; FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Teso: Anybody have any current events they'd like to report on?

(No current events from the Council)

Mayor Teso: Okay. Hearing none, any future agenda items?

(No future agenda items from the Council)

Mayor Teso: Okay. Moving onto Item #07.

ITEM #07 – CITY MANAGER AND DEPARTMENT HEADS REPORTS TO MAYOR AND COUNCIL; FINANCE REPORT – RTA PROJECTS/CONTRACTS; HOUSING CFP REPORTING BUDGET AND REPORTING PROGRESS

Ms. Moreno: Yes, good evening, Mayor, members of the Council, and Happy New Year. This is the first meeting of the year, 2021, and I hope and pray that this year brings us many blessings in light of the pandemic and all of us and our employees and the members of our community, you know, continue to wear our masks and hope that we get through this safely. And, of course, I'd like to formally introduce Betty Villegas. As you all know, we have been presenting recently the vacancy in the Housing Director position, which was filled by Interim Housing Director Maria Rodriguez, who did a great job. And she's not here this evening, but I'd like to thank her too. But it gives me great pleasure, after having several months of seeking the right candidate, I took my time and I wanted to make sure that we, you know, the City, we're able to get the right person to fill in those shoes and I can't think of anybody better than Betty Villegas. And she's here this evening, but before she gets up and talks about herself and what she brings, I'm gonna refer to the document that I provided all of you with and it gives you a little bit of history of who she is and what she will bring to the City, more than, not only just as our Housing Director, but also in her role as Board to the Pima County Board of Supervisors. So, with that, if you refer to the document, the City of South Tucson is pleased to announce the selection of Betty Villegas as its newly appointed, I'm going to take this off so I can (inaudible) a little more clearly there, as the newly appointed Executive Director of the South Tucson Housing Authority. Villegas is a Pima County native with deep family roots in South Tucson. She will assume the Executive Director duties effective January 4th, 2021, which was yesterday, Monday. She just completed an interim term as a District 5 Supervisor on the Pima County Board of Supervisors, serving the remaining term of the late County Supervisor Richard Elias, who formally served the City of South Tucson in the same position back in the early '90's. By the way, if you were still here, you remember Richard Elias as our Housing Director. I do. As a County Supervisor, she maintained executive and legislative responsibility for this local government entity with an annual budget of 1.1 billion dollars. She has extensive professional Housing and Community Development experience, having previously served for 17 years as the Affordable Housing Program Manager for Pima County. She was responsible for managing all Housing Department functions, including planning, organizing, and directing services to provide support and resources designed to enhance sustainable, accessible, and quality affordable housing for all. Villegas brings more than 25 years professional experience and service within the public and private sector. She has extensive experience working with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, as well as other state and local housing departments. Prior to her local governmental service, she served as a Management Executive within the banking industry, including offices here in the City of South Tucson. Her community service has also included active membership in the Arizona State Housing Commission and the Housing Alliance. Her extensive service, knowledge, and experience in the field of Housing and Community Development makes her most qualified to serve the City of South Tucson in this important Housing executive position. And I'd like to welcome Betty Villegas here at the City of South Tucson.

(Applause)

Ms. Villegas: I just want to say thank you to (inaudible) for those nice words. It is like coming full circle for me as my family, actually my dad's family is from here, from South Tucson (inaudible) still lives here. And so, I've been a part of this community for a long time. And my first job in banking was at Home Federal Savings and I started here on the corner of 29th and 6th in, a long time ago, and was there for 17 years, actually, and left there as, when Washington Federal took it over. I was there and was the Manager of the office before I left. And then I ended up in government, in Community Development, bringing my private sector skills into the public sector, and made some, some great strides in that way with my friend Richard Elias. So it's, it's really a coming home, coming back, coming full circle. I'm excited. I was previously in retirement. I retired in 2016 from the County, when I was called back to service when Supervisor Elias passed away. I realize that there is so much work to be done and I was not ready to retire. And when this position became available right at the time when I was leaving, it was an easy decision for me to, to make, so this is my second day. I, there's a lot of work to be done and I'm looking forward to it. I, I inherited a very good staff, I believe. And we're gonna make some, some good, I don't want to say changes because we're only gonna make changes as they need to be made, but we're gonna look at what can we do better, especially for the tenants and for the properties that we manage, to make the community stronger. And so, I, I'm looking forward to the challenge and the opportunity and I thank you all. And I'm here at your service. Thank you.

Mayor Teso: Thank you.

Vice-Mayor Lopez: Thank you very much.

Acting Mayor Oyegbola: Thank you.

Mayor Teso: Appreciate having you on board. Do you have any reports, ICM?

Ms. Moreno: No further reports at this time. Thank you, Mayor.

Mayor Teso: Okay. Then moving onto Item #08.

ITEM #08 – RESOLUTION NO. 21-01 OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOUTH TUCSON, ARIZONA, APPROVING THE SUBMITTAL AND APPLICATION FOR AN ARIZONA STATE PARKS RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM GRANT FOR GREENWAY IMPROVEMENTS AND AUTHORIZING THE SOUTH TUCSON INTERIM CITY MANAGER TO SUBMIT THE APPLICATION

Mayor Teso: Ms. Moreno.

Ms. Moreno: Yes, thank you, Mayor, members of the Council. I'm gonna refer this item to our Finance Director Lourdes Aguirre so that she can give you a summary of the Resolution and recommendations. Thank you.

Ms. Aguirre: Good evening, Mr. Mayor, members of the Council. As you probably read on the cover sheet here, there's been multiple levels of applications. This is the final application and so it's, it's moved right

along. The total amount of the grant, the Arizona State Parks and Recreation Trails Program is \$150,000 of which about 5% is required as a match from the City of South Tucson, which is very reasonable at \$8,500. The rest would be an in-kind contribution from partners like Chicanos Por La Causa. I think it's pretty straight forward. I don't know if any of you all have any additional questions, but this is just a process that would allow the City Manager to submit the application, the final one. Should there be additional questions, we also have Ms. Irma Yepiz-Perez who actually wrote the grant application.

Vice-Mayor Lopez: Mr. Mayor, I noticed that, that part of this is from 7th to 8th Street. And is it possible to extend it all the way down to 10th? The Greenway does go all the way through between, on 9th and, 8th and 9th.

Ms. Aguirre: Well, I'll, thank you, Mr. Mayor, Vice-Mayor, I'll refer that to Ms. Irma Yepiz-Perez because I don't know if there are some parameters that were specified in the application. Or if there is some flexibility there.

Ms. Yepiz-Perez: Good evening, (inaudible).

Ms. Moreno: Come up to the podium.

Ms. Yepiz-Perez: Good evening, Mayor and Council members (inaudible). My name is Irma Yepiz-Perez. I'm the Grant Writer and I just wanted to let you know that we're very pleased to have gotten the go-ahead to submit the final application for this as well because it is a lengthy process. And to answer your question, it can be extended. However, we're looking at specific spaces in the process. So, one of them, for example, is to be able to do this piece right now where we're gonna be able to plant some trees with another grant and then do these site amenity improvements, which is the benches and the items that are listed on there; the water fountain and, and some of those items. If we wanted to extend it, it's just a little bit of a lengthier process and I have to let you know why because the County, Pima County actually owns the property along the Greenway. And they have conducted studies and stuff like that so we can officially request it since this is mixed, a letter of recommendation, so to speak, for, for this specific area, for 7th to 8th Avenue. But if you would like for us to extend it, we, we need to request them to extend the area onto 10th Avenue. Or again, we could (inaudible) to other grants, Mayor. We could (inaudible) little bit further.

Vice-Mayor Lopez: Okay. Thank you.

Councilman Diaz: Is this an annual grant?

Ms. Yepiz-Perez: Yes.

Mayor Teso: You can reapply next year for ...

Ms. Yepiz-Perez: We can apply for ...

Mayor Teso: ... (inaudible).

Ms. Yepiz-Perez: ... it next year and say, hey, this is, you know, phase two in the process. Maybe the next one will go all the way to 26th Street (inaudible).

Vice-Mayor Lopez: I have another question. When this first, when you first started through the beginning there used to be a committee that we used to meet at House of Neighborly Service. Have those folks in that committee, should be contacted to see if they can provide us some information as to where we left off and where do we need to continue if necessary?

Ms. Yepiz-Perez: We, we don't, we're not required to, but yes, as part of the original Master Plan for the El Paso Greenway, they have some input in the process and we would definitely want to bring them on board; one, to possibly assist in the volunteer work. Once things clear up, you know, again, that they're gonna be able to monitor it so that they can (inaudible) maintain it, pick up debris, that type of thing. And then, also, to assist with tree planting and monitor that as well. So, but yes, we will be in touch with them as well as the organizations that are listed on there, with Chicanos Por La Causa working with us and we're also, Tucson Clean and Beautiful. So, there is (inaudible).

Vice-Mayor Lopez: Thank you very much.

Ms. Moreno: I just have one question. I know that the summary here does mention that our City of South Tucson Public Works Department is responsible for the maintenance of the Greenway. Does any of the funding for this plan include any salary reimbursement to the City for, you know, our very limited staffing at the Public Works to, you know, have an additional responsibility as far as, you know, or even that will be included in the, this grant?

Ms. Yepiz-Perez: Not necessarily ...

Ms. Moreno: Or (inaudible) ...

Ms. Yepiz-Perez: ... for ...

Ms. Moreno: ... I should say.

Ms. Yepiz-Perez: There isn't specific funding for maintenance. However, there is funding that we will be including in the grant for labor for one, which is a Project Management Coordinator that will oversee, help oversee the project as it's being implemented. And then also for dedicated labor, we're looking at at least two people that can, that will assist in the process, you know, in being able to move the, install the benches so there's (inaudible). Again, it's very little (inaudible) what I have listed (inaudible) of the in-kind match. What I included in this grant is the matching funds will come from, again, as staff time. So, if, if they go beyond 45 hours, for example, that they'll be participa-, that they will be paid. Some of that time will come from the City's time, so because they work in Parks and Recreation, we're basically going to take them to that site and that would be the City's matching contribution.

Vice-Mayor Lopez: Thank you.

Mayor Teso: Thank you. Okay. Does anybody have any other questions about the grant?

(No questions from the Council)

Mayor Teso: Do we have a motion?

Vice-Mayor Lopez: Mr. Mayor, yes, I'd like to make a motion to accept Resolution No. 21-01 of the Mayor and Council of the City of South Tucson, Arizona, approving the submittal and application for the Arizona State Parks Recreational Trail Program grant for the Greenway improvements and authorizing the South Tucson Interim City Manager to submit the application.

Councilman Romero: Second.

Mayor Teso: Any discussion?

(No discussion by the Council)

Mayor Teso: Okay.

Mayor Teso: Mr. Romero.

Councilman Romero: Aye.

Mayor Teso: Ms. Rogers.

Councilwoman Rogers: Aye.

Mayor Teso: Mr. Diaz.

Councilman Diaz: Aye.

Mayor Teso: Mr. Oyegbola.

Acting Mayor Oyegbola: Aye.

Mayor Teso: Mr. Lopez.

Vice-Mayor Lopez: Yes.

Mayor Teso: Aye. Motion carries.

Mayor Teso: Ms. Rodriguez, were you gonna speak tonight or?

Ms. Rodriguez: (Inaudible).

Mayor Teso: Okay.

Ms. Rodriguez: As you very well know, I was here last month at a Council meeting. And you could probably tell that voice was kind of shaky then 'cause I was so mad at what was going on. And this gentleman has corrected the problem in my area. And I just wanna give him a big hip, hip, hooray to him.

(Applause)

Ms. Rodriguez: Thank you, sir. Thank you. Less traffic, foot traffic, car traffic. I really appreciate what you did, sir. I really do.

Acting Mayor Oyegbola: It's my job.

Ms. Rodriguez: Thank you.

Acting Mayor Oyegbola: No problem. I just want to say is that really, if I was, if it was the other way around, I would want somebody to, to do it, so ...

Ms. Rodriguez: But it took you.

Acting Mayor Oyegbola: I mean, yeah, 'cause I had to talk to, had to get the permission ...

Ms. Rodriguez: But I ...

Acting Mayor Oyegbola: ... from (inaudible).

Ms. Rodriguez: ... have been coming here and giving my voice last week, or when I was here last, the ...

Mayor Teso: Fifteenth.

Ms. Rodriguez: ... Tuesday, you could tell my voice was shaking. I'm a very assertive person. I was in the hospital the next day. I went into Afib. That's how shaky I was because of the crap that's going in my area. Now, I'm not. Thank you again, sir.

Acting Mayor Oyegbola: You're welcome.

Mayor Teso: Thank you. Okay. Moving onto Item #09.

ITEM #09 – ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Teso: Do we have a motion to adjourn?

Councilwoman Rogers: So moved.

Acting Mayor Oyegbola: Second.

Mayor Teso: Okay.

Mayor Teso: Mr. Romero.

Councilman Romero: Aye.

Mayor Teso: Ms. Rogers.

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Councilwoman Rogers: Aye.

Mayor Teso: Mr. Diaz.

Councilman Diaz: Aye.

Mayor Teso: Mr. Oyegbola.

Acting Mayor Oyegbola: Aye.

Mayor Teso: Mr. Lopez.

Vice-Mayor Lopez: Yes.

Mayor Teso: Aye. Motion carries. We are adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

Mayor

ATTEST:

Veronica Moreno, City Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the City Council of South Tucson, Arizona, held on the 5th day of January, 2021. I further certify the meeting was duly called and a quorum was present.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2021.

Veronica Moreno, City Clerk